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UNCLAS TAIPEI 003505

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -  
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DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: BUSH RE-ELECTION

"Taiwan May Be Priority Issue for Bush's New Foreign  
Agenda"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language  
"China Post" said in an editorial (11/5):

"U.S. President George W. Bush, who won a second term  
in the Tuesday poll after defeating his Democratic  
challenger Senator John Kerry with 274 Electoral  
College votes and a projected margin of 3.5 million  
national popular ballots, is very likely to set Taiwan  
as one of his major diplomatic priorities during the  
next four years of his new administration.

"The reason is simple and clear: Bush does not want  
Taiwan, an issue which has already troubled him and his  
administration during much of his first term, to  
continue to stand in the way of his effort to  
strengthen Washington's Beijing relations. .

"A new U.S. administration would no longer just  
passively express a position of not supporting Taiwan  
independence. It could distinctly tell Chen that  
Washington disagrees with his claim that Taiwan is a  
sovereign country. And that it is opposed to any moves  
by Taipei to pursue de jure independence.

"Meanwhile, any new U.S. initiative in easing tension  
in the Taiwan Strait can be expected to include in  
increased effort to bring Taipei and Beijing to the  
negotiating table. A resumption of contacts and  
dialogue has been believed by Washington to be the best  
way to settle differences between the two sides. ."

PAAL